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She will be drenched with pitiful tears.

Jeanne d’Arc in the obligation and freedom of the *private law*

ABSTRACT: The most vivid images of Jeanne d’Arc demonstrate a girl who cried a lot, for her own people as well as for her enemies, who were suffering from the war she was inciting again, a war that served to liberate the oppressed, her people. This contribution attempts to situate her tears theologically in the context of *the gift of tears*. The tears she actually shed, especially on the day of her death, initiated a politics of tears that did not make her a saint, but a model of humanity until today.

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1. Tears creating a nation

J’entraî un jour chez un homme qui a beaucoup vécu, beaucoup fait et beaucoup souffert. Il tenait à la main un livre qu’il venait de fermer, et semblait plongé dans un rêve; je vis, non sans surprise, que ses yeux étaient pleins de larmes. Enfin, revenant à lui-même: “Elle est donc morte! dit-il. – Qui? – La pauvre Jeanne d’Arc” (Michelet, 1930, p. 1).

After a long and eventful life, it is the fate of a young girl from the late Middle Ages that an old man moves to tears. With these words, Jules Michelet begins his epoch-making story of Jeanne d’Arc.

The figure of Jeanne is one that still moves us to tears today. It doesn’t matter who hears or reads her story: “Telle est la force de cette histoire, telle sa tyrannie sur le cœur, sa puissance pour arracher les larmes! Bien dite ou mal contée, que le lecteur soit jeune ou vieux, qu’il soit, tant qu’il voudra, affermi par l’expérience, endurci par la vie, elle le fera pleurer” (ib.).

This statement of the emotional quality of Jeanne’s story this message, from the year 1841, is still up-to-date. And in the further development of history Jeanne herself is made to shed tears excessively, since those of the reader, the spectator, do not seem to be enough to appreciate the tragedy adequately, a tragedy for a young woman for whom one wept long before one was allowed to officially invoke her in prayer: “Le monde a admiré, et l’Église a prié. Ici c’est autre chose. Nulle canonisation, ni culte, ni autel. On n’a pas prié, mais on pleure” (p. 2). Before the official halo, Jeanne had long been in the spotlight as an icon of the French nation: “Souvenons-nous toujours, Français, que la patrie chez nous est née du cœur d’une femme, de sa tendresse et de ses larmes, du sang qu’elle a donné pour nous” (p. 8). Michelet

considers her a martyr for the French people, whom he addresses, including himself by the “*nous*”. But it is not only the French nation that feels addressed by the person of Jeanne; through her canonization in 1920 she has a universal significance in the Roman Catholic Church. Jeanne’s name reaches all parts of the world and is very appreciated. The question arises whether Jeanne was not rather a martyr for something that was much more than just local patriotic ambition which seems strange to us nowadays. They seem to have so much significance to this day that Jeanne’s tears are even used for commercialization. Today in Rouen sugared almonds called *Les larmes de Jeanne* are sold as a specialty of the city. The label shows Jeanne at the stake, the executioner behind her. Moneymaking through emotion of an event, a long time ago, a crying girl burned at the stake.

600 long and eventful years separate us and Jeanne, and they also involve different meanings with regard to emotions. I would like to explore Jeanne’s tears and the emotions associated with them in the late medieval context, in order to find out what tears were all about in the context of her trial records. And then to ask why this story still moves people to tears today.

2. The gift of tears

Tears do not exist in themselves but are physically, contextually and culturally determined. Tears are not just a sign of sadness, and although we have very nuanced interpretations of crying today, an understanding of the meaning of tears during Jeanne’s time is crucial to understand her tears. In Jeanne’s case, too, it is the very concrete human being that weeps, subject to a multitude of historical, cultural and social conditions. Jeanne was a person of the late Middle Ages who was deeply incorporated into Christianity. And it was precisely at this time that a special meaning was attached to tears, as a special gift and grace: the *donum* or *gratia lacrimarum* (Benke, 2002). The *donum lacrimarum* was established early on as an essential act of faith inherent in Christianity, and in the late Middle Ages it was impossible to imagine life without it. The gracious tears served above all the conversion of man, the repentant devotion to a God whose creation was sinful from the beginning. Therefore, the Passion of Christ, who sacrificed himself for the sin of man, was the focus of this time, plagued by turmoil and terror, in which people hoped for God’s saving action once again. The end of all tears remained the eschatological hope promised to those who believed: “Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh” (Luke, 6:21).

True tears were essential in the late Middle Ages for an outwardly demonstrated Christian piety, and at the same time, true tears based on a virtuous attitude remained a God-given charism, *gratia*. There were mystical women in the Middle Ages who caused a stir by their excessive weeping, like Margery Kempe. This could easily lead to the suspicion that it was not God himself who was at work, but the devil. The

Malleus Maleficarum, a guidebook for detecting witchcraft from the 15th century testified that weeping could be used as a sign of right belief in God, because a witch could not shed tears in the presence of her judge. Tears in themselves, however, remained open to interpretation. It was therefore particularly important to certify that Jeanne had shed genuine tears of repentance and contrition in order to portray her as a good Christian. But Jeanne also seems to have cried often in other ways.

3. Jeanne's tears

The most crucial scenes, the most vivid images of a weeping Jeanne who not only struggles but also deeply regrets the suffering she caused herself, are scenes reported in the records of the trial of rehabilitation 25 years after her death. It corresponds to the tactics of the trial of rehabilitation to highlight precisely Jeanne's outward and thus visible forms of piety as conforming to church doctrine. Thus, according to witnesses, she is said to have cried a lot during mass, confession and communion, signs of *repentance* and *humility*. The congruence of the inner and the outer had to fit. Besides crying out of religious emotion, Jeanne also cried out of fear, and pain, following the shock of her wounding, according to her innocence and youth. She seemed to be tended to cry easily, also when she was called a whore by her enemies (Duparc, 1977, p. 394). However, most of Jeanne's tears were shed – apart from receiving the sacraments – because of the horrors of war. Jeanne's tears in war are signs of an inner turmoil, of compassion, whether it was with her own people or with her enemies. She was well aware of the fact that she was responding to a war between two Christian nations whose real task was to live in brotherly peace. Her visionary eyes, which were filled with compassion, focused on what had to be done to put an end to this suffering. The great suffering felt for the loss of each enemy correlated with the pain of her country, which faced a constant threat that could only be taken away from her compatriots by defeating the enemy. She wept when she saw the consequences of her mission. The cruelty that her actions had to entail was softened by the images of a weeping Jeanne who never lost her *humilitas* in this war, which culminated in the recognition of the *humanitas* of her enemies.

The *collective emotion* of the French people, especially the pain of the little people who suffer most from the war, correlated with Jeanne's *inner pain*, which called her to action to put an end to this. The pain of the people manifested itself in Jeanne's tears, which she shed in motherly care. She understood her mission as the deepest expression of heavenly compassion for her people. She did not limit this *solidarity* to her compatriots, for she also saw the individual human being in the crowd of her enemies who were sent into battle for political reasons. This war was waged to the detriment of the poor, who could hardly defend themselves, and the soldiers who were the first to fall in battle.

Thus, in the image of the dying Englishman (Quicherat III, 1845, pp. 71-72), we see almost a *pietà*. The latter, a prisoner, had been so badly wounded by a Frenchman that Jeanne, who had seen this from her horse, immediately dismounted, encouraged him to confess his sins, held his head, and tried to comfort him all she could. That she constantly urged her own soldiers to confess and thus tried to wage as just a war as possible in a decent manner corresponded to the same mentality. It was an impossibility to prevent the soldiers from robbing and plundering, but she always tried, because she was especially concerned about *the poor* who suffered from this. Jeanne was part of this people, she knew the hardships of daily work, the daily threats, the situation of having to flee. She never forgot that the war she was trying to decide was fought on the backs of the little ones. And this attachment to the people was reciprocated. Especially in the personal encounter with Jeanne, many people, initially sceptics, began to cry “à chaudes larmes” (Quicherat IV, 1847, p. 211), because they were very moved by Jeanne and her words. Their hope for the salvation of the kingdom was confirmed at the coronation of Charles VII in Reims which evoked tears of gratitude. But there were not only tears in these glorious days of victory.

For Christine de Pizan, who had cried for 11 years over the decline of France (Quicherat V, 1849, p. 4), Jeanne made the sun shine again. And how much Jeanne’s mission must have caused tears of joy for Christine, who fought for a good image of women! It was through a woman that God helped his people and not through a man (p. 13). There were few people comparable to Jeanne. She was commonly compared to Christian male and female role models, but since these comparisons were all inadequate in regard to her particular appearance, her supporters also tried to interpret existing *prophecies*, from Merlin and Beda, towards her. And some of these prophecies also relied on the image of tears.

4. Prophecy

These prophecies spoke of a *puella*, a young innocent girl, to save France. Jeanne fulfilled the prophecies associated with her by switching from her passive weak female role, dictated by society, to the active strong male role of a virgin warrior, combining her innocent status with *male power* and *maternal affection*. She challenged and transcended gender definitions. But what she saw, what filled her eyes with tears, had to leave all conventions behind.

The just mentioned *donum lacrimarum* also qualified her as an announced visionary, as a prophetess who saw more than her surroundings, but above all the suffering of the poor, whom she considered herself sent to rescue. She took this suffering upon herself by making it her own. She was not a passive seer. As an *active prophetess*, she fulfilled herself what she announced, the liberation and salvation of her people.

Tears are what she was destined for in one of the prophecies circulating and referring to her, for *she will be drenched with pitiful tears*; she will constantly weep over the calamity of the kingdom and the labors of the French, she will be very merciful to the poor, and she will also be very compassionate to the humiliated enemies, as the prophecies were interpreted (Lanéry d'Arc, 1889, pp. 451-452).

To revise Jeanne's verdict of condemnation as a relapsed heretic, it was after her death particularly important to legitimize her warlike behavior and to free her from the charge of *cruelty* with the help of the concepts of tears and pity. Jeanne's virtuosity in warfare, praised in numerous documents, and mercy had to be balanced. But although she felt pity for her enemies, she was resolute to free France from them. Jeanne had become familiar with the milieu of battle and knew how to stage sieges, to win battles, to use ballistics. And although Jeanne preferred her banner 40 times over, she lauded the sword she had taken from a Burgundian, for it was extremely good for good blows and stabs (Tisset I, 1960, p. 78).

She will have realized very soon that this war could not be resolved diplomatically, at least not yet. She is known for her saying "que on n'y trouveroit point de paix, se ce n'estoit par le bout de la lance" (p. 105), that is, through military battles.

When she spoke of war during her trial, we are confronted with a different Jeanne from that of the early days, who often shed tears over the horrors of war. This lack of reluctance to military confrontation and bloodshed was highly blamed on her. Thus the accusation of her judges was that she had disturbed all true peace and had incited the war anew (p. 427), an accusation that was not unjustified by the English side, who also saw themselves as chosen by God.

Would there have been another way for Jeanne to intervene to decide this war, to end the suffering? For her contemporaries, it was precisely her miraculous talent in military skills that was a sign of God's intervention. For her enemies, it was a sign that she had to be a *sorceress*, a witch. And with Jeanne's first failures, her own party also began to suspect her, significantly the royal advisors.

5. Battles versus diplomacy?

After the coronation, Jeanne and her king still pursued the same goal, the reconquest of France, but Jeanne wanted to achieve this through military endeavor, while her king referred to diplomacy. The king's disinterest in his threatened cities was diametrically opposed to Jeanne's *loyalty* to them, and Jeanne found herself in conflict with her loyalty to these cities and to her king. Did she ultimately act against the king's will, as was implied by his advisors in a letter after her capture, that that she did not want to follow any advice and did everything as she pleased (Quicherat V, 1849, p. 168)?

Or did Jeanne's king deliberately send Jeanne to battle once again? Perhaps even with the knowledge that she, who could no longer rely on an army but only on a comparatively few hired soldiers, was exposed to the greatest danger and accepted this, nevertheless hoping that she could still win victories? Was she disturbing his diplomatic plans? And did she set out without his knowledge or permission to rescue the occupied Compiègne, where she was to be captured? The sources provide different pictures. It is certain that she saw her fight as not yet over and remained loyal to her king until death, even if she was sometimes not satisfied with his hesitation, his indecisiveness. Now the time had come to stop concealing the smouldering differences. Her fight continued by coming to the rescue of those who were threatened, the inhabitants of Compiègne. She could have fought elsewhere, but the inhabitants of Compiègne were in need of protection and called her. She came to help them like a *mother* is concerned for her children, like a *sister* tries to protect her siblings. It was because of the people of Compiègne, suffering from the alleged ceasefires, why she herself, already in captivity, tried to escape from a high tower to come to their help, risking her death, and interpreted as *suicide* in her condemnation trial.

If anyone maintains the care of the French people, it is Jeanne, who does not turn away, not even from that king whom she led to the coronation. But when the latter neglects and forgets his loyalty to his people, it is Jeanne who continues to carry out his royal *duties*, even when the man behind the king dithers and doubts. The fact that it is precisely Jeanne, the young peasant girl, who performs the least royal duties, the care for a people, is the paradox of the relationship between Jeanne and Charles. Consequently, Jeanne becomes the *virtuous fighter* and Charles the *female weakling* in literature.

Especially stage plays, novels and films illustrate the lack of dignity attributed to Charles VII, the lack of courage and, above all, the ingratitude and disloyalty not only toward Jeanne but toward his entire kingdom. Maxwell Anderson, however, emphasizes in his play *Joan of Lorraine* that this is and was irrelevant to Jeanne's mission, which was quite clear to her: if God wants to see him crowned as king, *He* cannot go wrong, regardless of anything Charles did or said. Anderson dramatizes this gap between them by setting the climax of the discrepancies between Jeanne and Charles right before the coronation. Jeanne would still have the option of taking away his crown because of his lack of dignity. But she knows about her divine mission, just as this was also essential for the historical Jeanne: "No. He could not be wrong. This is the king He chose and He could not be wrong" (Anderson, 1946, p. 74).

6. The Valley of Tears

Many of the great stage plays about Jeanne captured the constellations and mentalities of the characters at the time shockingly well. And each has recognized its own truth. While Bernard Shaw never makes his

Saint Joan, a bulwark of steadfastness, cry at any point, even though she would have reason enough to do so during the scenes, Anouilh only makes his Jeanne ou *L'alouette*, weep at one point within the play. When her judge confronts her with the fate of Jesus, who suffered more than anyone else to take upon himself the sins of the world, all past, present and future, and thus Jeanne's own sins as well, tears come to her eyes at his suffering, which so much outweighs hers. When she realizes that her mistakes are partly responsible for his suffering, she says, *les larmes aux yeux*: "Pardon, Messire. Je n'avais pas pensé que Notre-Seigneur pouvait le vouloir. C'est vrai qu'Il a dû plus souffrir que moi" (Anouilh, 1953, p. 157). She submits to her abjuration because this pressure of required *Christian guilt* is too great.

In 1431, after a long, intense trial, Jeanne renounced her voices and her mission, accompanied by desperate *laughter*, only to take this back just a few days later. Why? Why did she not accept her life imprisonment and continue to hope for rescue or escape? What was so important to her that she even accepted death for it? Maybe, in reality, the pressure of fear was too great on that day, the stake already in front of her. But after this, she seemed to have realized that the possibilities of leading a *self-determined* life were now exhausted. And the last self-determined act was to put on *men's clothes* again, which amounted to a commitment to her mission, resulting in her death sentence.

The statements on the day of Jeanne's death were made by witnesses who were interviewed about 25 years after the event and should therefore be taken with a grain of salt. For their task was to rehabilitate Jeanne's reputation without turning her into a saint.

When Jeanne was told on the morning of May 30th that she was to be burned alive that day, she burst into tears and lamentations. This shock, this fearful reaction to her fate is all too natural and it is all the more important to emphasize that the Roman Catholic Church turned exactly this reaction against her *canonization*. She cried for herself and her fate, screamed, quarreled, accused her judge, and shed tears of fear. This was not the reaction of a *heroic saint* who came close to her Creator. As a sign of fear, these tears demonstrated weakness and lack of trust in God, as the *advocatus diaboli* declared. These tears show *us* today, no saints at all, a very young girl who just wanted to stay alive. And yet, Jeanne herself had forced her destiny.

Now her time was running out. And after the initial shock, another cathartic process began for Jeanne, which was again accompanied by tears. Jeanne was comforted by the sacraments of confession and the Eucharist which she was granted and which she received immensely piously and in tears, as an outward sign of Jeanne's divine and ecclesiastical obedience. For too long she had asked for these sacraments, and they had been denied her. Now, however, in her world of faith, she received the greatest forgiveness of sins and the One who had died for her, "*cum maximis lacrimis et summa devotione*" (Duparc I, 1977, p. 399),

this little altar bread passing *sweetly* on the tongue, as it was not to be chewed, must have stood in peculiar contrast to her *salty* tears.

On the way to the stake she was also crying (p. 446). She now saw no reason to accuse anyone of her fate, to complain or to quarrel with it. It was no longer about France, no longer about the French king, it was about her salvation, about her deepest connection to what she believed in. Now there was only herself and God, whom she was soon to meet. She had not yet expected her death; the reconquest of France, for which she had been sent, was too incomplete, even if she seemed to have felt from the beginning that she did not have much time at her disposal. She is said to have told her king that she only had about a year and not much more and that therefore good action had to be taken this year. The year was long over, and what she had hoped for during her trial, namely *liberation* by her own people (Tisset I, 1960, p. 148), had failed to materialize; all that was left for her was to be freed by the One who had already freed her once through his own death.

And while she was already tied up at the stake waiting for the sentence to be carried out and spending her last minutes in prayer, she wept and so did those around her according to the witnesses.

And now we must be careful not to perpetuate *anachronistic* shortcuts. For the impression could quickly arise, and it has over time, that the tears of those present in the marketplace were a sign of the awareness that Jeanne had been unjustly condemned.

The witnesses in the trial of rehabilitation had to answer article 25 of the *catalog of questions*, which claims and *states as truth* that Jeanne, especially on her dying day, behaved most catholic and holy, recommitting her soul to God, and calling *Jésus* with a loud voice until she died; so that she moved all those present, even the enemies of the English, to a profusion of tears. “*Et sic fuit, et est verum*” (Duparc I, 1977, p. 196). This article does not ask for remorse from those who condemned Jeanne but wants to verify her most exemplary Christian end. In order to reverse Jeanne’s judgment, she had to be presented as a blameless Christian who died in an exemplary manner. This *conditio mortalitatis* let Jeanne weep for her own sins before death and was therefore extremely important before every execution. Everyone present was required to participate and therefore had to be moved to tears, “*fuerunt provocati ad lacrymas*” (p. 186), even the English hostile to Jeanne, including her judges. Up to 10,000 people would have wept, because it was a great pity (p. 202). *Pietas* in this context is a pity for Jeanne. Pitić, pietas, pity also means duty. It was a *duty* to have and to show this pity. Those present are obliged to feel pity for Jeanne who, far from accusing others or rebelling, withdrew into herself in exemplary piety, while still asking forgiveness from all around her (p. 218). Whether this was true to the facts or part of Jeanne’s required rehabilitation, it was symptomatic for this time. The spectacle of executions was based on this established order of repentance, the last possible return to orthodoxy, to the law, for everyone.

Those who weep for the sins of others, who thus participate in this suffering can in this way also cleanse themselves of guilt. Those tears of the crows were shed in the hope that God may be merciful to Jeanne, just as everyone hoped for themselves that *He* would ultimately prove himself merciful. *Substitutionary weeping* is a common Christian act in medieval times. That tears were shed at an execution, which naturally also satisfied sensationalism, was a daily occurrence and is attested for executions as well as for public sermons. And yet those present, children, women, men, soldiers, churchmen, English nobles, were certainly not insensitive to the fact that a young girl was dying a terrible death. Despite all the Christian sentiment at this time, there was certainly room for the simple regret that something so terrible, something so unnatural as the deliberate termination of a young life had to happen. There must indeed have been some murmuring among the crowd that, with such political *pressure* on the trial from the English troops present, the verdict against Jeanne might not have been entirely just. Thus, in addition to the already heated atmosphere, some French citizens of Rouen cried out of pity because it was said that Jeanne had been *unjustly condemned* (p. 380).

But the fact that executions took place in public was also a very practical means of reminding the crowd of their own wrongdoing and making a warning example. They saw what could happen if they did not follow the rules that served to protect the God-given order; and at the same time, the institutions demonstrated that they could maintain law and order. This earthly adjustment was restored by the execution of Jeanne. What happened in the world to come was another question.

The knowledge that ultimately this fallibility is inherent in all human beings and that everyone is in danger of misbehaving before the final judge and being expelled from the Church community creates a peculiar sense of solidarity between Jeanne and those present at her execution.

Jeanne's tears give those around her an insight into her innermost state of mind – they have a *social character*. Jeanne's tears had expressed the collective emotions of her suffering people at the beginning. At the end of her life, her tears turn into a collective crying of the crowd around her, revealing shared values, fears and hopes.

By being expelled from the Christian community and dying by fire, Jeanne, through the eyes of her time, performs the penance that makes her hope for the mercy of the last judge, for whom Jeanne alone now hopes. And in this, she is equal to all the others, in this awareness all political and social barriers and obstacles disappear and unite all those present. It could happen to any one of them, for they are all fallible, and thus simply still human and obstinate.

And it is precisely this humanity, *l'homme*, the human being itself, that brings Anouilh's lark to the stake. After her abjuration, she felt her hopelessness in this imprisonment. Warwick, who visits her in her cell, relieved that no execution has taken place, asks her if she is crying, which she denies. By talking to him,

in the agonizing certainty of her abjuration, she finds herself, finds her *No*, her negation of everything that is corrupt and wants to take her away from herself, and if it is the Christian humble attitude. She is not made for a normal life, for concessions, for compromises. For what is she if not Jeanne who fights for her *convictions*, loyal, brave and true? “Hé bien, j’assume, mon Dieu”, she calls out to *Him* who is silent, “je prends sur moi!” (Anouilh, 1953, p. 179).

She has learned perfectly, with the help of her voices, to govern herself (Tisset I, 1960, p. 47), without the clergy, without any man, so that she is now able to follow her deepest voice, her conscience. She knows that when *He* is silent, it is because she is capable of speaking and deciding for herself.

So we finally arrive at Jeanne, who actually took back her abjuration and in a very short time was again wearing the men’s clothes she had to take off before. And it is Jeanne, freed from norms and institutions, who now speaks and is a model for the *eternal human conscience*, for she no longer bows to any ecclesiastical pressure, nor to any that holds God before her as a moral pressure. For she now keeps this liberator from all chains pressed to her heart, the cross made of scraps of wood by an English soldier who felt pity for her, with which she dies weeping, calling out the name of Jesus.

Like Him, the Shepherd, she, the shepherd girl, is staged as the personification of innocence, *sacrificed* on the altar of greed, power and politics to serve the fancies of the powerful, who didn’t realize that they are creating a martyr by doing so. Jeanne herself walked the way towards martyrdom by withdrawing her abjuration and was not aware of it. Dreyer’s *Passion de Jeanne d’Arc* brought this comparison with the Passion of Christ to the heat. What Jeanne left behind was not religion, but courage and *hope*. Hope for justice, for peace, for change, for goodness, for mercy.

She did not die a martyr’s death for France, for her king, for her voices; she died because she was the way she was and wanted to be. And she did not want to remain in captivity. She wanted to continue wearing men’s clothes for the simple reason that she simply preferred them to women’s clothes (Tisset I, 1960, p. 396).

It is this decision to remain faithful to herself and to stand by what she recognized as irrevocable truth. Jeanne was no longer a humble instrument of God, in the service of a kingdom and a king. She was a young woman from a poor background who had changed and developed. She had acquired a position that was not allowed for a woman, but in which she felt herself at ease. She did not see herself as disobedient to the Church, she did not see herself as a troublemaker, as indecent, as heretical. What she did, what she wore, and what she said corresponded to what her conscience told her and conscience was nothing other than the so-called *lex privata*, the *private law*, a canon law that was brought forward in her favor in her trial of rehabilitation, the *spiritual inner law of the heart* which no one on earth is allowed to judge because it is God’s direct voice to man, the innermost core of his being. By the very private law of

divine inspiration, she was exempted from all common law and completely freed from all guilt (Lanéry d'Arc, 1889, p. 445).

Raised to the nobility, adored, equipped with horses and beautiful men's clothes, Jeanne found in her lonely imprisonment the *inwardness* that had emanated from her as a poor girl. She *transvested* herself, through word, deed and her outward appearance. She not only emancipated the images of women, whose rigid conceptions she liberated, but also the ideas of masculinity, which she effeminated through her transgender appearance. She *transgressed* the limits of her time. She impressed through her fearlessness, courage and consequent lifestyle. Jeanne transgressed expectations and saw herself committed to obedience to commandments that she placed in an otherworldly context, manifested in her voices but corresponding to her conscience, which is deeply embedded within this life. Her whole existence was based on this *trans* - based on something beyond, that she obeyed and called God.

Confronted with those who did not instrumentalize but clearly *condemn* her actions as a young self-determined woman she found herself, found names and faces for her voices. Jeanne realized that her mission was being given to her *externally* through her voices, but it was also *intrinsically* motivated and shared with her people. No judgment could destroy this inwardness, no fire could consume it, as Jeanne's executioner testified that neither Jeanne's *heart* nor her entrails, home to the innermost, could be burned. Jeanne's life is a sign of a movement of *transcending* her innermost being, of stepping beyond herself, of externalizing herself to the utmost pressure, which implosively pushes her own being back to the core. And then, broken down into all its individual parts, she affects all those around her – until today.

Thus, it is precisely this inwardness associated with tears that leads her abjuration, that was associated with (desperate?) laughter, *ad absurdum*. The tears at the end of her life, initially as a fear of death, are a sign for the return to the deepest core of her being, allowing herself to be governed by *lex privata*. This innermost call, this law of the heart, the freedom in spirit is the clue for so many women to identify with her. She becomes *transparent* and a *role model* for creating something new without completely rejecting the existing. The tension between external and internal demands is the centerpiece of the translation of Jeanne's life into our own time. This made politics.

7. Politics of tears

If we focus on Jeanne's attitude in her trial, there seems to be little room for tears, because she knew what and who she believed in, what she was fighting for, and why she had to keep fighting. At the same time, in the outer perspective, we are faced with the apparently tragic constellation of a young girl whose life has only just begun being condemned by an institution that seems to have misjudged her grossly. *We*

place our pity in this constellation of hierarchies, of gender constructions, of political intrigues. What happened to Jeanne, the greatest rise and the most solitary end, is such tragedy that we are tempted to portray what must have been going on inside Jeanne, *represented by tears* that express more than a thousand words, because they document Jeanne's inner turmoil, her inner war. And yet it is *our* sympathy, *our* compassion for Jeanne's fate to this day that evokes the most tears. For we sense the injustice behind her fate, in retrospect and with other understandings of church and politics. This makes Jeanne a role model of *identification* for all, especially women, who suffer injustice and discrimination to this day. Her tears thus also lead to a politics of emancipation, because with a remarkable self-confidence she took rights for herself that she did not have as a young peasant woman in her time.

Just as no adequate role model could be found for Jeanne during her life, she now serves as a great example for women who, following their convictions, taking up the struggle and acting in an emancipatory way. Tears are no longer strictly perceived in a passion-theological context and so they have become for us what they probably were in the end for Jeanne, who was religiously socialized but theologically untrained: Signs of *pity*, signs of *powerlessness*, signs of *weakness* in the face of the powerful, but capable of elevating weakness to strength.

The *gift* of tears is based on a *theology* of tears that leads to a *politics* of tears. For theology cannot be separated from politics in the Middle Ages and Christian theology made politics with the claim of the *inversion topos*, that the weakest can become the strongest, that the existing conditions are reversed. This has revolutionary potential, and it is this potential that is also inherent in Jeanne's doings and which contemporary sources emphasize. It is precisely a young, ignorant peasant girl who has been chosen by God to take down the powerful. And it doesn't need a God to postulate this potential, it lives in the inside of the human being. It also lives in the oppressed woman who is underestimated, and becomes a victim of men, as in Jeanne's case. Something deeply human is anchored in these theological approaches, which can claim truth for itself beyond religion and which gives Jeanne's example the potential for identification. Had she been uncomplainingly and willingly devoted to her fate, obedient to the Church militant, as a canonization actually requires, she would just be this, a saint of the Catholic Church. She would not have her unique significance within history, she would be like so many other prophetesses of her time. But in her stubbornness, in her obstinacy in the best sense of the word, she gains that feminist freedom that allowed Shaw to call her, in retrospect, the first Protestant.

Jeanne's name has become a synonym and code word for women who are trying to save or change their country, who are active in war, or who are fighting for minorities and women's rights. They are all united by the *fight against authorities* that are the domain of *men*. Do they not lack the compassion, the connection to creation, to motherhood, to see the suffering of the poor and powerless? Are not women the ones

who should speak out and act because of their preserving attitude, resulting from their maternal role? And what model of female courageous engagement who came so completely unexpectedly and who therefore possessed the greatest explosive power would be more suitable than that of Jeanne d'Arc? We see her as a fighter, but not with a hardened heart, not with cruelty, but out of compassion and with pity. For this defensive war in which she entered was one based on pity and thus also on inner duty, even though the martial spirit of her mission is at odds with today's pacifism.

Hardly anyone will claim that Jeanne failed. In *fidelity* to herself, to *humanity*, she has triumphed. And she was crying by doing this. Sometimes words are not needed to understand. Sometimes tears are enough. Tears are at no time without meaning or even incomprehensible, but they are dependent on time and space and therefore always open to interpretation. At the same time, they always have their value, a meaning, independent of temporal and mental-historical transformations, and can be understood as an expression of an inner convulsion that is capable of calling to action. Jeanne's tears not only created a nation, they created *an icon*, a *female role model* that can be called upon *worldwide*. Even though Jeanne has risen to the canon of the Roman Catholic Church, her life *transcends* this *institution*. Before *they* were allowed to pray to her, *people* shed tears for her. Jeanne belongs to *all* of us. Jeanne is *ours*.

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